

SAMPLE LETTER

Bureau of Land Management
Insert Address

Name
Address
City, State, Zip

Dear:

On February 3, 2000, after an extensive biological review, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) determined the black-tailed prairie dog warranted listing under the Endangered Species Act as a threatened species. However, because of other higher priority work, the FWS has delayed listing the black-tailed prairie dog for the time being, but will re-evaluate the status of the species every 12 months. As a result of this decision, the black-tailed prairie dog is now officially considered a candidate species under the definition as outlined in the federal regulations that govern the management of threatened and endangered species (50 CFR§ 424).

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is responsible for managing public lands for a variety of uses and resource values including the conservation of wildlife and their habitats. We are required under BLM's policy for conservation of federal candidate species to manage these species in such a manner as to ensure actions that we authorize, fund, or carry out do not contribute to the need to list any species. This means that any actions on BLM managed lands that may affect black-tailed prairie dogs and their habitat must be evaluated carefully so as to ensure the conservation of the species. Ultimately our goal is to ensure enough protection for the species so actions or activities we do approve will not result in the need to list the species as threatened or endangered which always results in even greater restrictions.

We have been asked by our Washington Office to notify all public land users about actions we are taking to conserve the black-tailed prairie dogs we are asking for your support and cooperation in carrying out the following actions:

- Notifying the public and public land users that any unauthorized use of poisons or toxic chemicals designed to kill or injure black-tailed prairie dogs is not permitted on BLM lands. If you are aware of any individuals or organizations that are deliberately attempting to poison prairie dogs on BLM lands, please notify the _____ Field Office at (insert phone number).
- Ensuring the conservation of the black-tailed prairie dog is being addressed in all livestock grazing permit renewal evaluations and associated environmental assessments as well as other activities such as oil and gas development, rights of way, organized recreational events, etc.

Attachment 1-1

- Cooperating with the (insert name of State wildlife agency), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and (insert name of any other agency with prairie dog management authority), to evaluate the need to close or restrict sport hunting of prairie dogs on BLM managed lands. If we determine closure of certain areas may be needed to conserve black-tailed prairie dog populations, we will complete the appropriate environmental analysis and obtain public input prior to making any final decision.